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DATAGRAM

Applicants to U.S. Medical Schools, 1977–78 to 1981–82

After a precipitous drop of almost 4,000 in 1978–79, the total number of U.S. medical school applicants remained essentially constant over the next three years (Table 1). However, the number of male applicants fell steadily, and the number of women applicants increased over the period. The percentage of women increased from one-fourth of the total applicants in 1977–78 to almost one-third in 1981–82 (Table 2).

The number of applications from underrepresented minorities (black Americans, American Indians, Mexican Americans, and mainland Puerto Ricans) increased at about the same rate as the total entering class size. The percentage of applicants from this group increased from 8.5 percent in 1977–78 to 9.6 percent in 1979–80, where it remained for the next two years (Table 3).

On the average during the four-year period, each applicant filed about nine applications.

The number of applicants accepted increased from 15,977 in 1977–78 to 17,286 in 1981–82. This represents an increase in the rate of acceptance from 39 percent to 47 percent. Except for 1977–78, women applicants were accepted at a slightly lower rate than males (Table 2). Black Americans and American Indians were accepted at a lower rate than majority applicants, while Mexican Americans and mainland Puerto Rican applicants were accepted at a higher rate (Table 3). An increase in the rate of acceptance of Commonwealth Puerto Ricans was due largely to the opening of two new schools on the island, one in January 1978 and the other in January 1979.

The percentage of accepted students who matriculated in medical school remained at

TABLE 1

Summary of U.S. Medical School Application Activity, 1977–78 Through 1981–82

First-Year Class	No. Schools	No. Applicants	No. of Applications Filed	No. Accepted	No. Matriculated*
1977–78	122	40,569	371,545	15,977	15,493
1978–79	125	36,636	335,982	16,527	16,054
1979–80	126	36,141	335,209	16,886	16,301
1980–81	126	36,100	330,888	17,146	16,590
1981–82	126	36,727	339,975	17,286	16,644

* Number matriculated as first-year new entrants, excluding those repeating, reentering, or continuing the initial year.

TABLE 2

Comparative Acceptance Data for Men and Women Medical School Applicants, 1977–78 Through 1981–82

First-Year Class	No. Applicants			Percent Women Applicants	No. Accepted		Percent Accepted		No. Matriculated*	
	Men	Women	Total		Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1977–78	30,374	10,195	40,569	25.1	11,896	4,081	39.2	40.0	11,549	3,944
1978–79	27,075	9,561	36,636	26.1	12,352	4,175	45.6	43.7	12,059	3,995
1979–80	25,919	10,222	36,141	28.3	12,156	4,730	46.9	46.3	11,769	4,532
1980–81	25,436	10,664	36,100	29.5	12,196	4,950	47.9	46.4	11,832	4,758
1981–82	25,054	11,673	36,727	31.8	11,953	5,333	47.7	45.7	11,522	5,112

* Number matriculated as first-year new entrants, excluding those repeating, reentering, or continuing the initial year.

TABLE 3

Application and Acceptance Rates of Applicants to First-Year Classes in U.S. Medical Schools by Self-Identification, 1977–78 to 1981–82

First-Year Class	Black American			American Indian			Mexican American			Mainland Puerto Rican		
	No. of Applicants	Percent of All Applicants*	Percent Accepted	No. of Applicants	Percent of All Applicants*	Percent Accepted	No. of Applicants	Percent of All Applicants*	Percent Accepted	No. of Applicants	Percent of All Applicants*	Percent Accepted
1977–78	2,487	6.4	38.8	122	0.3	35.2	487	1.3	46.6	203	0.5	45.8
1978–79	2,564	7.3	37.8	133	0.4	40.6	433	1.2	55.7	191	0.5	48.2
1979–80	2,599	7.4	39.4	151	0.4	42.4	457	1.3	58.4	173	0.5	53.2
1980–81	2,594	7.4	40.7	147	0.4	42.2	449	1.3	53.5	191	0.5	53.4
1981–82	2,644	7.2	39.2	160	0.4	42.5	515	1.4	54.6	222	0.6	50.9

	White			Asian/Pacific Islander			Commonwealth Puerto Rican			Other Hispanic		
	No. of Applicants	Percent of All Applicants*	Percent Accepted	No. of Applicants	Percent of All Applicants*	Percent Accepted	No. of Applicants	Percent of All Applicants*	Percent Accepted	No. of Applicants	Percent of All Applicants*	Percent Accepted
1977–78	32,128	79.2	40.9	1,318	3.2	34.3	345	0.9	34.2		NA	
1978–79	29,709	81.1	47.0	1,520	4.1	36.6	341	0.9	45.7	538	1.5	34.0
1979–80	29,334	81.2	48.3	1,660	4.6	38.2	379	1.0	42.7	582	1.6	41.1
1980–81	28,645	79.3	49.0	1,774	4.9	40.6	465	1.3	47.5	646	1.8	39.6
1981–82	28,998	79.0	48.4	1,976	5.4	41.7	476	1.3	51.7	675	1.8	39.4

* Applicants not specifying race were not included in the computation of percentages. For this reason, some figures may differ from those given on tables for previous years, and the sum of the subtotals of applicants for each racial group does not equal the grand totals listed in Tables 1 and 2.

about 97 percent during the period. The number of first-time matriculants increased from 15,493 in 1977–78 to 16,644 in 1981–82. During this period, the number of first-year places increased from 16,136 to 17,268. Thus, some 3.5 to 4.0 percent of the classes were made up of students who were either repeating, reentering, or continuing the first year of medical school.

Data compiled by Susan N. Sherman, Division of Educational Measurement and Research, Association of American Medical Colleges, Washington, D.C.